IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claim 1 as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) A method of processing a halftone color image when the halftone color image is to be printed in monochrome, the method comprising the steps of:

detecting a predetermined property of a line-like part of the halftone color image, and

processing the line-like part of the halftone color image by a clustered dot dithering technique or a dispersed dot dithering technique according to the predetermined property of the line-like part,

wherein the predetermined property includes both the thickness and the density of the line-like parts so that, when the line-like part is of a thickness smaller than a first threshold value and at the same time is of a density higher than a second threshold value, the part is processed by the dispersed dot dithering technique and otherwise the part is processed by the clustered dot dithering technique.

2. (Originally Presented) A method as defined in Claim 1 in which the halftone color image is printed in monochrome by a printer which is not higher than 600 dpi in resolution.

3. (Originally Presented) A method as defined in Claim 2 in which the predetermined property is the thickness of the line-like part so that when the line-like part is of a thickness larger than a threshold value, the part is processed by the clustered dot dithering technique and when the part is of a thickness not larger than the threshold value, the part is processed by the dispersed dot dithering technique.

4. (Originally Presented) A method as defined in Claim 3 in which the threshold value is a value corresponding to 4 dots.

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Originally Presented) A method as defined in Claim 2 characterized by being carried out by a printer driver.

7. (Originally Presented) A method as defined in Claim 2 in which two series of brush patterns are respectively prepared in advance for the clustered dot dithering technique and the dispersed dot dithering technique, each series of brush patterns being prepared according to the density of the line-like part, and the clustered dot dithering technique and the dispersed dot dithering technique are carried out by the use of the brush patterns selected according to the density of the line-like part.

8. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for processing a halftone color image when the halftone color image is to be printed in monochrome, the apparatus comprising:

a selecting means which selects a clustered dot dithering technique or a dispersed dot dithering technique according to a predetermined property of a line-like part of the halftone color image, and

a processing means which processes the line-like part of the halftone color image by the technique selected by the selecting means.

9. (Originally Presented) An apparatus as defined in Claim 8 in which the halftone color image is printed in monochrome by a printer which is not higher than 600 dpi in resolution.

10. (Originally Presented) A recording medium in which a program for carrying out the method defined in Claim 1 is recorded.

11. (Originally Presented) A recording medium as defined in Claim 10 in which the halftone color image is printed in monochrome by a printer which is not higher than 600 dpi in resolution.

12. (Previously Presented) The method as defined in claim 1, wherein the predetermined property includes both the thickness and the density of the line-like parts and detection of the line-like part of the image is carried out using attribute data.

13. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as defined in claim 8, wherein the predetermined property includes both the thickness and the density of the line-like parts and detection of the line-like part of the image is carried out using attribute data.

14. (Previously Presented) The recording medium as defined in claim 10, wherein the predetermined property includes both the thickness and the density of the line-like parts

and detection of the line-like part of the image is carried out using attribute data.